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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

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19 June 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH: Acting Chairman, National Intelligence Council

FROM: [REDACTED]
Acting National Intelligence Officer for Europe

SUBJECT: The European Allies' View of the Third World
and the Reagan Doctrine

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1. In general West Europeans do not share our perception of the need to confront and roll back Soviet influence in the Third World. At the heart of the difference in US and European perspectives are diverging views of the Soviet Union as well as different assessments of national interests.

2. Some differences stem from historical trends. As European empires have retracted, West Europe's outlook has become less global and more insular. Thus, West Europeans do not always share the US belief that common national security is jeopardized if we fail to react strongly to critical developments in Third World areas. They tend to stress diplomacy in Third World conflicts such as Nicaragua and distrust the use of force. (Most have foreclosed this option anyway by gradually allowing their own military's geographic reach to deteriorate.)

3. Differences in broad policy priorities also come into play.

- Many West Europeans fear that the Reagan doctrine will distract the US from disarmament talks -- the key concern in East-West relations for them -- or worse, set back arms negotiations.
- They also fear that the doctrine will generate new pressures from the US for out-of-area activities by NATO forces.

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- They prefer to believe that Moscow's severe economic problems will force the Soviets to adopt a more pragmatic and defensive policy in the Third World. They also expect that Gorbachev in particular will consolidate Third World gains of the 1970s rather than risk new expansionism.
- Finally, they worry that US actions against Soviet clients and associates in the Third World areas could raise East-West tensions, adversely affect their economic interests in the Third World, lead to terrorist retaliation in Europe and, at the extreme, produce a Soviet-US confrontation that might transcend the Third World.

4. A potentially more serious development in West Europe is a growing trend -- especially among the youth -- to rank Soviet and US foreign policies as "morally equivalent."

- Certain European circles such as intellectuals and the media in the UK and FRG are prone to be more critical of US activities in the Third World than they are of Soviet behavior.
- This does not mean that anti-US feelings become pro-Soviet leanings; rather the trend is towards a "pox on both your houses" mentality.
- Most national leaders do not share this perspective but are still under pressure to respond to these new voters.

Conflicts between the US and West European policy in the undeveloped world will intensify if Labor in the United Kingdom or the SPD in West Germany make a strong showing in polls prior to national elections in 1987.

5. Not all the trends are unfavorable.

- Qadhafi's increasingly erratic behavior has made some West European governments such as Italy and France more sympathetic to US concerns and more willing to condone the use of force at least in instances of Libya's direct challenges to Europe's security interests.
- French public opinion is increasingly jaundiced towards Soviet policy goals and favorable to the US. There is some hope that this hard-headed view will expand to other European elites.

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- Many Europeans are increasingly aware that Gorbachev is making a major military resupply effort to Angola and Central America and becoming more committed to a military solution in Afghanistan.

6. For the moment though these encouraging signs tend to be scattered and issue-specific. It would take a good scare -- say a major Soviet adventure in the Third World or another crackdown in East Europe -- to reverse the contention between West Europe and the US over the Third World.

7. Intelligence support for the Reagan doctrine in Europe falls into several categories.

- Our analysts help policymakers calculate the factors which influence European leaders to support or reject US proposed action in the Third World. In part this effort entails a persistent effort to understand new trends in European opinion as they become influential on policymakers.

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- Both collectors and analysts are working dilligently to expose the surrogate roles of East European regimes in manipulating opinion in West Europe and augmenting Soviet policy in the Third World.

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